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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 271. FEBRUARY, 1930.

TRUTH — LIBERTY — RELIGION.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"
—I Cor. 3 : 16.

CONTENTS :

Editorial .. .. .. Front Page
The Saviourhood of Science, by Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A. 17
Ministers and Laymen, by Critic .. 19
The Joy of the Sunday School, by Rev. J. Begg 20
Visions and Dreams, by Ullin .. 23
Historical Gleanings, by H. J. F. Orr .. 24

Editorial.

Remonstrant Synod Centenary.

Is it possible that we are going to allow this important centenary to pass without adequate recognition? The event is due in May and we have not yet heard even of preliminary preparations. Amid the babel of voices arising from our various overlapping organisations which we still continue to carry on our back like Sinbad carried the old man of the sea, no one seems to know exactly whose business it is to handle this important matter. In our mind there is no doubt as to whose business it is. The preparations for such an important event is not the business of any individual or group of individuals but the business of the Non-Subscribing Church of Ireland which owes so much to Dr. Henry Montgomery. If any private preparations are being made it is time they were made public. If no preparations are being made it is time the Church's representatives clerical and lay, were called together to discuss the matter. We repeat that this is the business of the Church and not the business of a few individuals in the Church.

Wake Up.

Not long ago we drew attention to the comparatively poor representation of ministers and laymen at the Annual Service in the Ulster Hall, observing that there are apparently many "finished" Non-Subscribers in Ireland as there are many "finished" Unitarians in England. This month we intended to have something equally strong to say regarding the poor attendance at the Laymen's League Dinner on January 17th, but our sentiments have been well expressed in a short article by "Critic" which appears elsewhere in this issue. Those who are working to make the Non-Subscribing Church the moral, spiritual and progressive force it should undoubtedly be, are not a little disheartened by the apparent lack of interest in some quarters of both clerical and lay spheres. Again we ask, *what is wrong?*

Bishop Barnes and Unitarians.

Surely Bishop Barnes should know that he cannot attack Unitarians without seriously undermining his own theological position? His statement made a few days ago, that the Unitarian view of Christ is inadequate, is hardly in harmony with the rest of his most modern of modernist views. Immediately after this controversial statement, which by the way, a local newspaper converted into a sub-heading, came the "illuminating" truth that "Modernists could not explain Christ without postulating His divinity," followed by the equally "illuminating" truth that the Modernists "accepted the doctrine of Jesus human and divine." Evidently this is an "adequate" view of Christ. Every well informed person knows that this is exactly the Unitarian view of Christ. It is difficult to know what the Bishop means. He states that the Unitarian view of Christ is inadequate and then goes on to expound the Unitarian belief on this matter and calls it the "adequate" Modernist view of Christ. Evidently everything depends on the speaker. When the view is expressed by Bishop Barnes it is called adequate, but when expressed by a Unitarian minister it is called inadequate.

Ulster "Packed" Benches.

The stories of "packed" benches are hardly in keeping with the dignity and prestige of the ancient and honourable office of Justice of the Peace, It is most disturbing to know that many magistrates take little interest in the court and appear only on those occasions when the bookmakers and their friends appeal for "packed" benches to make certain that the lowest possible fine is imposed. Yet we have this on the authority of the Lord Chief Justice. His suggestions for reform, which include a drastic cut in the number of J.P.s', and the appointment of officials solely on the ground of efficiency and not for political reasons, will commend themsides to all who retain their admiration for the British conception of Justice. Reform is certainly needed. It is most unsettling to think of a magisterial decision depending, not on the weight of evidence but on the voting strength of the opposite interests represented on the bench. Perhaps the next Northern Parliament Act for limiting the powers of Justices of the Peace, due in the near future, will seriously grapple with the question of "packed" benches?

The Naval Conference.

It is to be sincerely hoped that the present naval conference will be more successful than the many similar conferences held during the last ten years. In spite of all the "successful" terminations of previous naval disarmament conferences we are still waiting for anything that bears even the ghost of a resemblance to disarmament. It is true that the Washington Conference of 1921, the first really serious international attempt to limit armaments, put a limit to the sizes and numbers of battleships, battle-cruisers and aircraft carriers in each navy, but this success was more apparent than real. From that date the race of armaments was not stopped but merely run along different lines. The smaller number of large ships was soon counterbalanced by the larger number of small ships. So we are still waiting for the first really successful naval disarmament conference. May the present one prove to be the first.

Mountpottinger Branch Women's League.

On Wednesday, 8th January, a useful lecture was given by Mrs. Sayers, B.A. She introduced her subject. "Things that want Mending," by referring to the present-day responsibilities of women. We do not now leave all social-science problems to be dealt with only by men. Women feel there are many ethical subjects upon which they can be of use in helping to bring about happier conditions to those in need. Our Lecturer made special reference to "Prison Reform," and related a very pathetic incident respecting a case of temporary imprisonment under suspicion. There is a big need for new methods regarding "Mere Suspicion and probable innocent cases." Measures should be taken to avoid all unnecessary mental suffering to the unfortunate one. Miss Sayers suggested some happy ideas with regard to Prison methods, and very much emphasised how wrong it is ot do anything which destroys the individuality of the person. Our Lecturer also referred to "Infant Mortality." "Cruelty of Hunting Live Animals," and "Vivisection." Miss Sayers urged us to acquire all the knowledge we can regarding the subjects she had been speaking upon, and thus be in a position to do our part in bringing into action the necessary reforms. Mrs. Ewbank presided, and in the course of her remarks gave a vivid illustration of the sadness and terrible mental suffering of some prisoners who are isolated, they are tortured with the thought of the wrong they have done, the cruel isolation is not conducive to their reformation. Mrs. Ewbank thanked Miss Sayers for her kindness in coming to talk to us, and felt sure, after our hearing such an interesting and instructive lecture, we must all feel that we have responsibilities which require our immediate and serious consideration.

LAYMEN'S LEAGUE.

The Monthly Meeting will be held in Central Hall, on February 20th, when Professor W. J. M'Callister, M.A., Queen's University, will give an address. All friends will be welcome.

The Saviourhood of Science.

[Summary of sermon preached in the First Church, Rosemary Street, on Sunday morning 12th January, 1930, by the Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A.]

I.—The Old Testament and Law.

On many a page the Old Testament sets before us a God who has built the world on foundations of law and who rules human life and history by law, law majestic and irrevocable. The law was the part of divine revelation most deeply sacred to the Hebrew mind, and the sense of the moral relentlessness of God breathes through the cry of prophets and psalmists. Their noblest teaching is that in the Divine economy suffering and disaster inevitably follow from transgressions of God's Commandments and that the one necessary condition of national and individual well-being is through insight into, knowledge of, the moral law and conformity with it.

This teaching is extraordinarily modern. Science has rediscovered it and extended it also to the physical order. Our scientists are the true successors of the inspired prophets of old who are teaching us that God's dealings with human life are not arbitrary and that salvation from evil and suffering lies in man's learning the laws of things and adapting his conduct to them, i.e., through obedience, for law is inexorable. Experience teaches with irresistible force that knowledge and enlightenment are factors in the divine scheme of man's salvation and that in their proper sphere neither piety nor superstition can be any substitute for them. Repeated disasters like the death of 70 innocent children in the Paisley Cinema fire, or the heavy toll of death in the sea by the recent gales, or a thousand other accidents of daily occurrence, make abundantly plain that neither human agony or prayer can induce God to intervene or interfere with His fixed order of cause and effect. To expect that He will is but blind and unavailing superstition, as every Irish farmer who has lost stock or crop through rain and flood knows in his heart from dire experience. Only when we have got at the real causes of things are we on the way to real cure. "Happy," said the ancient classical writer, "are they who know the causes of things."

It is this incontrovertible truth which has enabled science to be the greatest friend and saviour of mankind in the fight with forces that have cursed and afflicted it. Take the case of disease and illness.

II.—Bad Theology and Disease.

In the Middle Ages under the teaching of a false but orthodox Christian theology, plague and pestilence swept over Europe and carried off men, women and little children with a blind cruelty, and were put down to visitations of God, his anger at the sins of men. This theological explanation was wrong though it was pious enough. Science arose and its researches gradually made clear that plagues were due not to God's agency but to man's ignorance of the laws of health and hygiene. Medical and sanitary science has discovered these laws and as a result of their enlightenment and efforts Europe has been freed from these gigantic scourges.

Science said "Let there be light," and that light has been the life of man. It has saved millions of lives and wiped out a mass of human affliction.

A recent leading article in the "London Times," tells us that, Patrick Manson, in his discovery in 1877 that Elephantiasis was due to the filarial worm, and could transmitted from victim to victim by the mosquito, laid the foundations of tropical medicine. From that, medical science went on to discover that other ravaging diseases like malaria, sleeping sickness, and typhus fever were spread by the same agency. Biology took up the tale, and by the study of the life history of the mosquito, put mankind in possession of the remedy, so that the life and health of untold multitudes of human beings have been saved and great spaces of the earth with their resources made available for civilisation.

The work is being carried forward by lonely pioneers in Africa to-day who are studying the tsetse fly which has brought death to man and beast in wholesale fashion.

Nor can we forget what science and engineering have done to deliver millions in countries like Egypt and India from destruction by famine, when simply praying was absolutely useless.

Science, light, intelligence, these are the divine means of deliverance in a world of relentless law; these cannot be the enemies of true religion, for they are the great friends of man, which bring healing in their wings. They work *their* miracles year in and year out; they are sure in their operation and they are at the disposal of all.

And the theology, however it wrap itself up in so-called piety and orthodoxy and quotations from the Bible, the theology which fights against the advance of scientific enlightenment is evil superstition which blinds itself to the mind of God and His Statutes. Such theologians are enemies of the race. For ignorance, darkness, is the foe of man, light is his friend.

Still to-day a great deal of illness and suffering is ascribed to the divine discipline, and to God's agency, which is really due to human causes. Medical and pyschological science both teach that much physical and mental breakdown, and a good deal of moral obliquity, in youth and adult life are due to wrong and ignorant treatment of children in their earliest years. The effects of it only come to the surface long years afterwards, and the means of prevention of this avoidable illness and suffering are to be found in better handling of infants.

III.—Infant Mortality.

There is a terrible mortality among infants in the land. Belfast last year lost 119 out of every 1,000 born, before they reached one year of age. God did not take them. They were the victims of conditions in Belfast, of the ignorance, incapacity, and lack of a sense of responsibility on the part of parents and the community. We talk of Christianity in a community, where this preventible slaughter of the innocent goes on.

Responsible people tell us that the mothers love their children all right, but they have no knowledge of mothercraft. They have never been taught. Overcrowding, dirt, improper feeding, semi-starvation, no knowledge of the laws of hygiene, the having of so many children that they cannot have right attention when they come, these are among the causes. So the infants perish and those who manage to survive grow up with enfeebled constitutions and various physical and mental defects.

Girls are taught geography, history, etc., etc., but nothing about their own bodies, nothing about babies. They know more about the rivers of America than about their own ribs, and about the kings of England than about their own bones We need schools of mothercraft. They ought to be everywhere. And we need among the lowest sections of the population the development of a new morality, which will recognise that in an overcrowded civilisation it is quality not quantity of children that is the duty of parenthood, a new morality which will abstain from bringing into this stern world children toward whom the most elementary duties cannot be fulfilled, and who are condemned to failure before they are born. Mere marriage must cease to legitimate, at the bar of public opinion, every crime and wrong against the unborn child. On any other field we admit that knowledge is a pre-condition of right fulfilment of function, and we teach these subjects, why not also in the case of the most vital function of marriage and motherhood? Our educational system is here grossly deficient, and the innocent suffer grievously. Science with its great friendliness to man has given us the laws of health, let us teach them in our schools, and save the children yet to be.

Ravara Meeting House.

Will any congregation or individuals who possess copies of Hymns for Christian worship and have them to spare, kindly give them for use at above Meeting House. Please communicate with Rev. J. D. Davies, Moneyrea, Comber.

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The Treasurer acknowledges, with thanks, the receipt of the following donations in aid of the Magazine. Further donations are earnestly solicited and should be sent to Rev. G. J. Slipper, Trevor Hill, Newry.

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Heaven cannot be won by pretence, nor can the risks of Hell be increased by sincerity.—*Prof. J. E. Davey.*

The strength of a man's virtue must not be measured by his occasional efforts, but by his ordinary life.—*Pascal.*

Ministers and Laymen.

By Critic.

A Call to Both.

Looking round the assembled company in the Central Hall on the occasion of the Complimentary Dinner given to the Ulster Ministers by members of the Laymen's League, I was impressed by the absence of both Ministers and Laymen whom one might reasonably have expected to be in attendance.

Out of twenty-five ministers who were invited only twelve were present. Allowing for two who were out of the country, a further two who in view of advancing years do not favour night travelling and another who had very special reasons for being absent, we have eight others (several of them young men) who might have been present.

The percentage of Laymen was even worse as they mustered but fifteen and only two of these had taken more than a suburban journey to the hall

Had it not been for the ladies who were present the function would have proved a featureless event.

What is the reason for such apathy?

As regards the absentee Ministers it could not have been lack of travelling facilities since where private cars were not available motor buses would have solved the problem.

The Laymen show in even a worse light as a tram journey would have sufficed to bring them down and it was surely not a matter of reluctance to pay the moderate cost of a ticket.

I am credibly informed that on the previous evening a quarterly meeting of the Women's League brought together a gathering of over one hundred which included contingents from Cairncastle, Larne, Comber, Ballyclare, Moneyrea, and Newry, and in only one instance was a private motor used.

That same night there should, in accordance with the printed Syllabus Card, have been a Chapter Meeting of the Laymen's League. Two members turned up.

No room had been engaged they were informed and yet neither had been notified of a postponement. No meeting was held, and they returned home sadder and wiser men. Laymen, wake up!!

At the Dinner, which was quite a pleasant function, appreciative reference was made to the value of the Women's work in the Churches, and their better attendance at public worship. I sometimes think that too much of the work in a Congregation is left to the women and in some places a Sewing Meeting or a branch of the Women's League represent the total activities. This makes one wonder whether in the not too distant future the work of the Church both in pulpit and pew will not be in the hands of women. Ministers and Laymen, wake up!

A minister was heard to say that there should be no sex in his profession; that a minister should be as much at home in a Sewing Meeting or a Women's League meeting as in his pulpit.

Ministers SHOULD have a sex—they should be **men.**

They should say, "I will have nothing to do with your Sewing Meetings and your Women's Leagues; get on with your own work, but I **will** have the men, I **will** gather the men together. We will work together. We will have carpentry classes, philosophy classes, reading circles, debating societies. We will even have billiards, cards and dart clubs. They shall teach me business methods and I will teach them religious habits. Ministers, wake up!

The meeting of Ministers and Laity in friendly talk should be repeated and repeated often; frank discussion should take place and result in constructive criticism. By this means we may bring about a better understanding between the pulpit and the pew.

Unitarian Women's League, Ulster District.

The Quarterly Meeting was held at Mountpottinger Unitarian Church, on Thursday, January 17th, at 7-30 p.m. A service was conducted by Mrs. Eustace Thompson, of Cairncastle. Miss Armstrong, President, took the chair at the meeting which followed, when Miss Greenfield, of Larne, gave a talk on "The Friendly Road," taking her audience with her on many roads of fact and fancy and in manner both whimsical and philosophical gave a delightful address. Mrs. J. H. Ewbank, of Mountpottinger proposed the vote of thanks to the speakers, which Mrs. J. G. Davies of Comber seconded. Members were present from the following branches: First Church, All Souls', Mountpottinger, Stanhope Street, Ballyclare, Comber, Holywood, Larne, Moneyrea and Newry.

Laymen's League Dinner.

On Friday evening, January 17th, the Belfast Chapter of the Laymen's League entertained the Irish Non-Subscribing ministers and their wives to dinner in the Central Hall.

Mr. John Wilkinson was in the chair and voiced a hearty welcome to the guests. The various toasts provided opportunities for both laymen and ministers to reveal much hitherto unsuspected wit, wisdom, and humour. After the toast of "The King" by the Chairman, Mr. Laird responding to "The Northern Government," proposed by Mr. J. Wilkinson, eulogised the Government for its effective social reforms. Mr. Laird was enthusiastic in his advocacy of temperance reform.

Mr. Robinson in proposing "The Non-Subscribing Church," asked that we should be worthy of our great tradition, "We have the goods," said Mr. Robinson, "let us deliver them."

The Moderator of the Church (Rev. J. G. Davies, Comber), in responding paid a tribute to the work of the Laymen's League, making special reference to the annual Ulster Hall service. The Women's League received suitable tribute from the Moderator.

Rev. S. P. Whitehouse (Moderator of Antrim Presbytery), the Rev. J. H. Ewbank (Moderator of Bangor Presbytery), and the Rev. A. Turner (Moderator of Templepatrick Presbytery), also responded to the toast of "The Church." Mr. Ewbank revealed himself as a most entertaining after-dinner speaker, while Mr. Turner was also in humorous vein. Mr. Whitehouse pleaded for more definite and clear-cut teaching in the Non-Subscribing Church.

Mrs. Davies, Comber, and Mrs. Jackson, Mountpottinger, both held attention while they urged the feminine point of view.

The Rev. R. N. Cross, pleased by allowing himself a little licence when proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Taylor for their delightful music, introducing a few matters relevant to the Non-Subscribing Church and the Liberal Faith which is its proud heritage.

The function, the first of its kind was a most happy and memorable one. The Laymen are to be congratulated on this latest of their many moves to foster the sense of church fellowship and to bring the pulpit and pew into still closer contact.

S.P.W.

The Joy of the Sunday School.

By the Rev. J. Begg.

Somewhere in the Jewish Talmud I believe there is a reflection made upon the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem to the effect that Jerusalem was destroyed because the instruction of the young was neglected. It is a subtle and far-reaching reflection. But whatever it held for that far-off time and place it cannot be said to-day that the instruction of the young is neglected—and yet it is perfectly true that our security and stability as represented in worth and character of life are about as reliable as a mist before the rising sun. We do not lack in the giving of instruction, and if salvation lay by the way of *theory* then the existence of centres of instruction, of hand books for Teachers, of magazines of exposition of correct morality and true religion, of provisions in the way of primary departments and adult schools, would testify to the certainty of our continuity and growth. Yet I am not certain that we could truly say that our present day is very much better for all the theory that we unfold in the teaching of the young of the way wherein their feet should go. Perhaps it is—and I will not be pessimistic.

Nevertheless, any reflection upon the provisions made for modern Sunday Schools as compared with the arrangements under which our fathers worked must lead us to consider that our results ought surely to be more manifest than they are. We shall not concern ourselves here with deeply hidden causes for this condition of things; all I would plead for here is that with all our modern contrivances for making teaching easier, and the understanding of ethics and religion more certain by the young, we still often enough seem obviously to lack the spirit of joy in our Sunday Schools.

Sunday School Weariness.

Emerson in one of his essays makes a complaint against Sunday Schools in general: "Why drag this dead weight of a Sunday School about the world"? he asks. Doubtless he was thinking of the children, and that long-faced nonsense that made Sunday Schools a bore for the young. But the complaint to-day might be heard from the teachers. Our Sunday Schools now are hardly any longer a "dead weight" for the children, but what do the teachers feel about them? Judging from the number who content themselves with reading from "The Coral Island," or "Little Women

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and Good Wives," or who simply read from the headings and helps in the Sunday School monthly. I imagine that they have felt the weariness of the School, and not the joy of teaching. And I am thinking that without this spirit of joy in the work our results will always be more or less questionable. I speak not so much as regards results in numbers as in quality and conviction in character of those taught. It is possible then to catch this spirit of joy in the Sunday School, and how can it be done? You will agree perhaps that the joy of life comes from some simple understanding of the world about us, and our own place and purpose in the scheme of things—*i.e.*, when we are able to give some answer to the question "Why are we here"? The same I beli ve is true regarding the work of the Sunday School. If we could ask ourselves sincerely and intelligently *why* we seek to teach at all, then we begin to set foot on the road that brings us to the place where are to be found the well-springs of joy. Our teaching even then may not be great or grand, but it will have that in it that makes for true value—it will have our heart's interest and concern. Let us consider how we may look at this Sunday School teaching.

Sunday School "Searching."

The Jewish Synagogue School was called the Beth-Midrash or the House of Searching. Isn't that something of an ideal purpose for the Sunday Schools of our churches? The Synagogue School, I suppose, was regarded as a community of old and young searching for the Truth about God and Life. It was a searching for the truth according to their own light; but that is all that can be done by any people at any time. Our Sunday School teachers I think may find in this thought of "Searching" a real help to their own efforts. It does not imply the thought that we must be *infallible* guides in our teaching, which is just what some teachers seem to think they have to be and are afraid of assuming, but it does imply the thought that we must be in *earnest* (and that is what is not always manifest in our teaching). *It gives also a joy* to the work, like the joy that is found by a patrol of Boy Scouts seeking and searching for the hidden message.

The method of such searching in our Sunday Schools will no doubt be found most beneficial and effective when conducted in that simplest and most downright and upright manner of *question* and *answer*. Why? What? When? How? Where? These questions, truly and earnestly asked will call forth from both scholars and teachers the best they have to give. What child does not appreciate an opportunity of exercising its thought about the great world in which it lives, or about the things it has heard at home or outside? It is the verty life of the child too, to ask questions, and to try to find out the reason and meaning of things, and the values of the world about it.

Teaching the Teacher.

Further, this thought of the Sunday School as a "Home of Searching" and this method of searching is really an education for the teacher as well as those taught, for then it cannot mean that we simply parrot out somebody's else's thought, but we have to set to work to think and find out for ourselves. But it is not altogether a harder way than the other of teaching, for the experience of most teachers is in advance of their scholars and so they have the advantage of knowledge. The Sunday School then thought of as a "House of Searching" gives a joy to our work; old and young together are seeking after the true things of life; teacher and taught are at one in searching and striving after goodness and God, and the differences between each is but one of experience.

The joy of our Sunday School comes when we *really* believe that our work is of vital concern, and has a missionary value for the church and the world. We are apt to think that anything will do for the Sunday School and that anybody will do to take our place whenever we have the merest excuse for being absent. That is when we have lost our vision of what the Sunday School might be. The work is absolutely vital. Browning in one of his poems tells us of a picture in which an angel is portrayed intently engaged upon something or other of concern. At first it does not appear clearly what he is doing. But he appears chained to the spot eagerly intent on doing something. And when you look at the picture closely you see by the side of the angel a child kneeling with closed eyes and uplifted hands and face—and the angel is teaching the little child to pray. The heavens are opened and other angels are beckoning this angel to heaven. On the earth great enterprises are beckoning the angel also. But he is chained by his own

will to the spot, for to teach the little child to pray is better than entering heaven, at least before his work is done. It is nobler to so continue than to leave it because the world seems to hold greater enterprises. It is a parable for our Sunday School, and in understanding of it there is joy for our labour. A child is a soul, and nothing on earth or heaven is more valuable. To help any child to understand what its life is, what God is, to help in the unfolding of those virtues of reverence, chivalry and honesty, is a task we may set ourselves as being the most important in this world for us.

An Evangelising Agency.

The Sunday School may be a great evangelising agency. The work we may do Sunday by Sunday in our schools, great or small, may bring a nobler manhood and womanhood into the world : it may strengthen and deepen the affections and convictions so that religion and life shall be sweetened and exalted. The work *is* vital, for without it, I believe, society would sink to a line of but poor attainments and paltry enterprise in spiritual things.

But we need to keep constantly before our minds the vision of our purpose in teaching and our uniting together. To forget that is to lose that joy of the Sunday School without which he who teaches falters and often fails. Let our purpose be simple enough and sincere enough and then no doubt in many cases even as of old it will be true that the teachers' life will be in itself the life of his teaching.

Scrap the story book for the class, —be it the "Coral Island," or any other of exceeding interest in itself, it is best left at home at the time of the Sunday School. The story is better told without the book. In simple searching with the scholars for the truths of Life and Religion, in faithful adherence to the conviction of the significance of the work being done, then there will doubtless also burn within the soul of the teacher a light of Hope and Joy that will be manifest in the enthusiasm of action.

N.B.—Editorial Communications should be sent to the Rev. S. P. Whitehouse, 19 Wellington Park Avenue, Belfast.

Phone—Malone 378.

Contributions must be in the Editor's hands not later than the 20th of the month.

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York Street Church.

Farewell to Rev. A. L. Agnew.

The Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., who is going to Switzerland during the present week, conducted a farewell service at York Street, Belfast, N.S. Presbyterian Church on Sunday evening, when there was a good attendance.

Addressing the congregation, the Rev. Mr. Agnew said that he would not preach a sermon. What they were there for was to say good-bye to him and he to them. When he had to leave them two years ago at the same season of the year their parting was not so hopeful, as no one knew when he would return, but this time he hoped to return early in April, fully restored to health.

Since his return York Street has progressed, and the annual report, which was now published, showed that the church had cleared off much debt, but not all. The gallery, along with other things, had greatly increased the expenditure for the past year. But, notwithstanding, this year's report was the best since the church had been founded, 90 years ago.

A farewell re-union was held by the Church Guild on Saturday night, when the Women's Guild presented the Rev. Mr. Agnew with a travelling case. Mr. Agnew suitably replied.—"Belfast Evening Telegraph," 13th January, 1930.

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OBJECTS (inter alia).

To encourage laymen to take a more active part in the work of the Churches.

To form a bond of union and closer co-operation between the members of the various congregations.

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Visions and Dreams.

By Ullin.

Iuga Dei, the "Yoke of God" is the ancient name of the Grey Abbey, on the Ards Peninsula. Yoga, a Sanskrit word is the root of "yoke," and is well-known in the East. It means "union" and the method of attainment. Of this there are several schools, and one type which "seeks first the kingdom, when all else will be added unto you," which aims at spiritual unfoldment first, and from that works down upon the physical, controlling and "bringing it into subjection," is the Royal or Rajah Yoga. The type which begins by subjecting the body, frequently to much suffering, in order to conquer pain, and sometines attaining interesting results in the way of psychological tricks and a certain type of clairvoyance, all of which means a tremendous waste of time and life-force, compared with the meagre results, is the Hatha Yoga. That is the type which figures largely in missionary papers, and is represented as constituting the religion of the Hindu, who if spiritual and cultured will not touch it.

One of the services rendered by Comparative Religion, in comparing spiritual things with spiritual is the discovery of new values in old familiar statements. Yoga, the science of meditation, leads the consciousness, into what the Pistis Sophia (a Christian Gnostic treatise, which is a system of Christian Yoga) calls the Within of the Within, through the portals of that temple which each one of us, is,—the body, the soul, to that shrine where dwells the Holy One,—"the Hidden Man of the Heart." There the consciousness is focussed and one realises union with God. That is the ascending and descending which Jesus described to Nicodemus, when He spoke to him of "heavenly things," and said—"The Son of Man is in Heaven." We can sit in our homes, and if we have the right sort of "receiver" we can tune in with London, Paris, Berlin, and many other places. The human body is far more wonderful than any wireless set ever invented by man. It carries a wireless set about with it, the brain and the nervous system. A book "In Tune with the Infinite," was very popular some years ago. Christ was in tune with the Infinite when he said "I and my Father are one." When He carried his consciousness from one level to another, "tuning in" to the other worlds, he was "ascending." He could "tune in" to heaven. While talking to Nicodemus, He was "tuned in" to heaven, and He said "the Son of man is in heaven." The Science of Yoga would agree with that. In a humbler degree, but sufficient to verify and understand the possibility—it has been done and is being done, East and West.

We may by prayer and meditation raise our consciousness on to those higher levels. We possibly may not have the power to see and hear at those levels, but we can experience the peace, and strength and happiness that belong to them. We may thereby find a fortress into which to retreat, from the evil that assails us. But there are to-day books published by those who have given time and labour concentratedly to this subject and who maintain they have obtained results. One interesting item is that of contact, not by means of any spiritualistic mediumship, but direct with a Unitarian minister who died whilst still young, and whatever the value of it, at any rate it chains the interest of the reader. He found that his philosophy of life has, under the great test proved to be, in the main, sound and well-founded. Very briefly, what purports to be his statements may be quoted and summarised. It was two days before he realised what had happened. He thought he had awakened with exceptionally bright sunlight. After a short time people gathered round and he was told the truth. His first feeling was of keen disappointment, there was so much he had hoped to do. That feeling has since vanished "for I am a parson still with a wider parish and a larger flock than I ever dreamed of, and a ministry of a new order is opened up to me. The difference between the two worlds is not so great as I expected. Allowing for the loss of the body the environment is not dissimilar, but the change is more marked in the mind. The result of a week's study on earth can now be achieved in an hour. Prayer and meditation become scientific processes, the results of which are objectively visible as they are produced. Many of the people attending the college in which I now work have physical bodies and come to us during sleep, when an endeavour is made to give them ideas for their work on earth. I personally am working more among the living than the dead. We teach by lecture, demonstration, and also by objective thought—visualis-

ation. Inwardly I have been lifted up to a great realisation which I can only describe as union with God, an interior communication with Him which seemed to satisfy an answer to all the spiritual cravings of my life. It is like a wonderful dream come true."

Historical Gleanings of Our Country Churches.

By H. J. F. Orr.

Antrim.—Built 1700. Restored 1892. Archibald Ferguson, 1st minister 1645-54. Some historians say John Ridge, 1619-36, was first minister, he was Vicar, and no Presbyterian.

Ballee.—Built 1721, but congregation was formed in 1697 and met at Ballyclander. Wm. Smith, 1st minister, 1701-1847. This church has had only seven ministers since founded.

Ballycarry.—Congregation formed 1646. Robert Cunningham 1st minister, 1646-97. This church had Rev. John Bankhead as pastor, 1763-1883, probably one of the longest pastorates on record, he had as assistant Wm. Glendy, 1812-1853.

Ballyclare.—Congregation formed 1655. Gilbert Simpson 1st minister, 1655-62. Present church built 1871.

Ballyhemlin.—Congregation formed 1833. Church built 1835. 1st minister, Wm. Hugh Doherty, 1834-1338.

Ballymoney.—Congregation formed 1832. Minister, George Hill, 1834-36.

Banbridge.—Congregation formed 1716. 1st minister, Samuel Young, 1717-20. At one time there were two churches, one now Masonic Hall.

Cairncastle.—Congregation formed 1646. Church built 1668. 1st minister, Patrick Adair, 1646-1674, when he came to 1st Belfast.

Clough.—Present Church built 1837. Clough was one of the congregations who lost their property by legal proceedings instituted by the Presbyterian Church. Thomas Maxwell was the 1st minister, 1687-1705. David Watson was the minister at the time of law suit.

Comber.—Congregation formed 1838. 1st minister, Wm. H. Doherty, 1838-50.

Crumlin.—Congregation formed at Glenary 1672. 1st meeting house built, at Crumlin (Camlin), 1715. Present building 1837. Mathew Hallridge, 1st minister, 1673-76.

Downpatrick.—The early records of this congregation were unfortunately destroyed by fire some years ago. 1st minister, Archibald Young, 1673-88. The Nevins, father, son and grandson were ministers in succession, 1711-1789. Samuel Craig Nelson officiated here for 56 years, previously he had been in Dromore for 10 years.

Dromore.—Present Meeting House built 1801. The first church was in Porend Street. Henry Hunter, 1660-1673, 1st minister. The Colvilles, father and son, officiated from 1696-1777.

Dunmurry.—Congregation formed about 1686. 1st Church built 1714. Present building 1779. Alexander Glass, 1st minister. The celebrated Dr. Henry Montgomery was ordained here 1809; his only church. Died 1865.

Glenarm.—Church built 1762. Congregation dates from 1655, when Alexander Gilbert was minister.

Greyabbey.—Congregation first formed Ballywalter, 1626. In 1733 Greyabbey was included and since then so called. Present building 1862. James Porter, 1787-1798, was executed for being involved in the Rebellion, 1798. An attempt was made to oust his successor John Watson by the Presbyterian Synod, but was not successful.

Holywood.—Congregation from 1645-1704, was included in Dundonald. A lengthy sketch of this church's history was given last year in N.S.P.

Killinchy.—Congregation formed 1670. Present church erected 1846. The old Meeting House built 1714. The congregation joined Remonstrant Synod in 1835, and was deprived of property in 1843, same as Clough. The first church building was erected 1670. Micheal Bruce, 1st minister

Larne and Kilwaughter.—Congregation formed 1646. 1st church 1688; 2nd, 1752 Present building 1828. The first minister was Thomas Hall, 1646-1695.

Moira.—Congregation formed about 1693. Present church built 1738. 1st minister, Samuel Ferguson, 1693-1703.

Moneyrea.—Congregation formed about 1719. 1st Minister, Rev. Hamilton, 1725-1735. Present building was erected or rather rebuilt during the pastorate of Rev. James M'Kean, 1746-1773. Rev. Fletcher Blakely 1809-62 was prominent in the formation of Remonstrant Synod a century ago.

Newry.—Congregation formed about 1650 where until 1688 they worshipped at a place

called Meeting House Rocks. Present church is the 4th. 1st minister, George Lang, 1688-1702.

Newtownards.—Congregation formed 1642 John Maclellan, 1642-9, 1st minister. Rev. Hugh Moore, 1826-1888, another long pastorate in our denomination.

Rademon.—Congregation formed 1713: one time known as 1st Kilmore. Present church 1787, is the third building. Thomas Elder, 1716, first pastor.

Raloo.—Congregation formed 1838. John Compton, 1st minister, 1839-48.

Ravara.—Congregation formed 1837. Recently re-opened.

Templepatrick.—Dates back to 1646 when Anthony Kennedy preached. The late Sir John Campbell published an interesting sketch of this congregation.

Warrenpoint.—Congregation formed 1820, formerly in Carlingford, 1707. John Wilson 1st minister, 1700-1729.

Dr. Wm. Drennan.

One hundred and ten years ago, February 6th, 1820, Dr. Wm. Drennan, was interred in the old Clifton Street Cemetery. Few nowadays visit this old burial place now surrounded on every side by varied buildings, but then in the suburbs.

A son of the Rev. T. Drennan, pastor of the First Congregation, 1736-1768, he became well known as a physician, poet and patriot. He received his professional education at the universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and practised in Newry, Dublin and Belfast, successively. He was small in stature, slow, deliberate. He soon took an interest in politics and attracted attention by a series of letters in the *Belfast Newsletter* 1784, under the title of "Letters of Orellana, an Irish Helot." An early promoter of the society of United Irishmen, he stirred the patriotism of his countrymen by many compositions. In his song, "Erin to her own tune," he called his country "The Emerald Isle," an appropriate and permanent appellation. It is a great pity that his poems are out of print. Dr. Drummond of Dublin wrote "some of his hymns were of such rare beauty and excellence as to cause a regret that they are not more numerous." He took a prominent part after his removal to Belfast in the establishment of the Academical Institution and in conjunction with John Templeton, the celebrated botanist and John Handcock, of Lisburn, started the short-lived *Belfast Magazine.* He took a great interest in the poor and along with others formed a committee to alleviate the great distress prevalent in the early part of the nineteenth century.

"Pure, just, benign thus filial love would trace
The virtues hallowing this narrow space
The 'Emerald Isle' may grant a wider claim
And link the patriot with his country's name."

Thus reads his epitaph in this almost forgotten burial place.

Obituary.

Miss Sarah Steward, Crumlin.

By the death of Miss Sarah Steward, on January 2nd, the Crumlin Congregation is considerably poorer in spirit. Miss Steward (who was over 71 years old) was one of those rare souls, who find never-ending interest in what others call the small things of life, and to whom "the trivial round, the common task," are truly a universe of wonder. She never seemed to understand why her neighbours and friends should be so kind and helpful. The truth is that she herself was always willing and active for others' well-being. She was proud to be a Unitarian (though with her two brothers the only ones in the district) and she lived in conscious communion with God. She had worked very hard all her life, cheerfully and willingly spending herself for others. When the Call came she was quite prepared. Bravely she suffered her last short illness, then passed peacefully away.

Reports.

Banbridge.—The Annual Party was held in the Dunbar Memorial Schoolroom on the Friday night between Christmas and the New Year. There was practically a full attendance, and it was one of the most enjoyable gatherings we have had. Tea was the first item, prepared by the ladies, and appreciated by all. Then Messrs. W. T. Radcliffe and V. Bryans (Rover and Scout leaders of this district) took charge and organised some exhilarating games, into which the young ones entered with great zest. The Distribution of Prizes won for attendance at Sunday School was gracefully made by Mrs. Bell. The minister, introducing, spoke of the general high average attendance being well maintained this past year. Only one scholar actually attended every Sunday, and to him, Gordon Martin, the special prize was awarded.

Mrs. Bell was thanked by all. "Father Christmas" came into the room after this, in a right jolly mood, and we are sure the original would not feel ashamed of Mr. V. Bryan's impersonation. Indeed we wonder whether that venerable old gentleman, could have, or dared have, led the community singing as Victor did. It took the form of original versions of well-known nursery rhymes—but very soon from the very youngest, all entered into the idea and the room resounded. We could have gone on for much longer than we did, although "Father Christmas's" voice was tiring, but brave still, only there were a hundred gifts to be distributed. This distribution, very far from becoming monotonous was interspersed with humorous incidents from the versatile fun of our impersonator. But all good times must end, and Auld Lang Syne, God Save the King, and the Benediction concluded, as we said, one of the most enjoyable evenings.

* *

Holywood.—The Annual Sunday School Soiree was held on Friday evening, January 24th, and, as usual, was a jolly and uproarious success. The children, to the number of 70, sat down to tea at 7 o'clock, and rose up to play games until 8 o'clock, when their parents and friends attended and the evening's programme began. First came a fairy sketch called "Molly-break-my-Toys," played by scholars who had been excellently trained for their parts by Mrs. F. A. Robinson. Then the stage was cleared for the distribution of the prizes to the successful scholars. Forty-four children qualified for awards for good attendance, and of those no fewer than nine had attended punctually every time the school was opened. Miss S. R. Praeger, after presenting the prizes, told some delightful reminiscences of the days when as a girl she attended the school conducted in that room by Rev. C. J. M'Alister, among whose scholars was the present Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Viscount Craigavon. The minister proposed a general vote of thanks, and hearty cheers were given for Miss Praeger, Mrs. Robinson, Mr. W. J. Harvey, and Sir Robert and Lady Kennedy, the donors of the Christmas Tree. Afterwards Miss Praeger told the children a charming fairy story. Mr. Harvey (brother of the organist) sang two comic songs, Miss Eileen Miller, gave two recitations, and then to crown all, Father Christmas (Mr. Donald Lockett) distributed the gifts for the youngsters from the Christmas Tree.

* *

Moneyrea.—A Cake and Candy Sale was held in the Lyttle Memorial School, on Saturday, December 21st, to raise funds to defray the cost of the erection of a new class-room. The new wing, built on handsome lines and in accordance with the requirements of the Board of Education, was almost completed on the day of the Sale. The proceedings commenced at 2 p.m. with a short dedicatory service conducted by the Chairman, Rev. J. D. Davies, at the conclusion of which, the Architect, Mr. Watson, presented Mrs. John Chambers, Belfast, with a silver key, with which she unlocked the door, and declared the new wing open. In the course of his remarks, the Chairman referred to the purpose of the Sale and to the excellent work that had been done for the success of the school by the manager, Mr. Hugh Frame, and Mr. T. J. Mullen, the schoolmaster, and also referred to the kindness of Mrs. J. Chambers, who represented a good old Moneyrea family, in coming to open the new wing and the Sale that day. Mrs. Chambers spoke of the old relationship between her people and Moneyrea and expressed the hope that the Sale would realise the sum required, and declared the Sale open. Afterwards she was presented with a box of embroidered handkerchiefs, by Miss B. Millen. Mr. Hugh Frame in proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs. Chambers, gave a short resume of the development of the school, and was followed by Mr. Millen, who seconded the resolution which was passed with acclamation. Mr. William

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Orr and Mr. Robert Kennedy proposed and seconded a vote of thanks to the Chairman. The Sale has already realised over £300, so the new wing is opened free of debt.

On December 23rd, a Christmas Party was held in the Lyttle Memorial School. The ladies of the congregation presided at the tea tables. The children were entertained at 6 p.m. and the adults from 7 p.m. in the new wing, after which all retired to the main body of the school for the Concert and presentation of book prizes. The children of different grades who gave an excellent programme of choruses, songs, and recitations, were carefully trained by Mr. Millen and his staff. By the kind permission of Messrs. A. Heywood & Sons, Ltd., two short comedies entitled "The Barber's Courting," and "The Absent Man," were presented.

* *

Mountpottinger.—On the Sunday immediately preceding Christmas there was for the first time a Christmas Service for the Sunday School children instead of the afternoon school. The various Christmas hymns which had been practised under the guidance of Miss K. Forrest were sung with a cheerfulness of spirit which befitted the occasion. Seasonal decorations were kindly put up by some of the ladies Mrs. J. Allen at personal inconvenience was present to sing a solo rendered in her usual sympathetic manner. Miss N. Martin undertook the duties of pianist whilst Miss M. Forrest acted as accompanist, for Mrs. Allen. Instead of an address from the Minister, Miss K. Forrest read a delightful little pen picture dealing with snowflakes which was followed by the scholars with keen interest. The same evening the choir under the direction of Mr. H. Shepherd gave a special Musical Service in the Church when the choir sang Christmas Carols and Anthems. It is very much to be regretted that the somewhat unpleasant night told against the attendance as the whole Service deserved a full church. The congregation is again under a debt of gratitude to Messrs. A. Doyle and J. M'Ilwrath, who gave up a goodly portion of their Christmas holidays to the erection in the yard of a large hut which has been procured on exceptional terms. By this means a dry storage place will be found for a lot of the odds and ends associated with the Church and Sunday School and a long-felt want has thus been filled.

Congregations of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Belfast.—First Church, Rosemary Street, 11-30 and 7, Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A.
,, All Souls', Elmwood Avenue, 11-30 and 7, Rev. Sydney P. Whitehouse.
,, Mountpottinger Unitarian Church, 11-30 and 7, Rev. J. H. Ewbank, B.A., B.D.
,, York Street Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 11-30 and 7, Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A.

Dublin.—Unitarian Church, Stephen's Green, 12 and 7, Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A.
Antrim.—Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 12 noon, Rev. George V. Crook.
Ballee.—11-45, Rev. Joseph H. Bibby.
Ballycarry.—Rev. William G. Marsden.
Ballyclare.—Rev. A. M. Bell, B.A.
Ballyhemlin.—Rev. John Barron.
Ballymoney.—The Remonstrant Meeting House, 12-15 p.m., Rev. Felix Holt, B.A.
Banbridge.—First Presbyterian Church, 12 noon and 6-30 p.m., Rev. Percival Godding.
Cairncastle.—Old Meeting House. 12-15 p.m., Rev. Eustace Thompson.
Clough.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Meeting House, 12 o'clock noon.—Supply.
Comber.—Rev. J. Glynne Davies.
Cork.—Rev. W. A. Weatherall.
Crumlin.—The Old Presbyterian Church, 12 noon, Rev. G. Price-Jones.
Downpatrick.—First Presbyterian Church, 11-30 a.m., Supply.
Dromore.—Rev. Alfred Davison.
Dunmurry.—Rev. John A. Kelly.
Glenarm.—Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 12 noon, Rev. J. A. Miskimmin, B.A.
Greyabbey.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 12 noon (6 p.m. November to February), Rev. W. H. T. Tilson, M.A.
Holywood.—First Presbyterian Church, 11-30 a.m. and 7 p.m., Rev. Edgar Lockett.
Killinchy.—Rev. David J. Williams.
Larne.—Rev. James Kennedy, Rev. John Begg.
Moira.—Rev. Percival Godding.
Moneyrea.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church 12 o'clock noon.—Rev. J. Dare Davies.
Newry.—First Presbyterian Church, 12 noon and 7 p.m. (October to May), Rev. G. J. Slipper.
Newtownards.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 3-30 p.m., Rev. W. H. T. Tilson, M.A.
Rademon.—Rev. John J. Magill, B.A.
Raloo.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, 12 noon, Rev. John M'Cleery.
Templepatrick.—Rev. Alfred Turner.
Warrenpoint.—Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church.—Services fortnightly, October to May, at 3-30 p.m.—Rev. G. J. Slipper.

Once again—for the sixth time—the Editor asks for full details from all Congregations.

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